

Week, a time for us to look back on the year's efforts to prevent fire-related deaths, injuries, and property damage, and an occasion to reflect on the important role of the brave men and women who comprise our national fire service.

Mr. President, as you know, fire is a serious problem in the United States—an average of 4,000 Americans die from fire annually and nearly 30,000 Americans sustain fire-related injuries every year.

Fire Prevention Week falls on the anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 which tragically killed 250 people, burned 17,000 buildings, and rendered over 100,000 people homeless. As a Nation, we have made significant progress in our efforts to improve firefighting and prevention methods since then, but we still have a long way to go. More recently, the Happy Land Social Club fire of 1990 in New York City which claimed the lives of 87 people reminds us of the massive destruction that can be caused by fire.

Increasingly, however, the efforts of our fire service and organizations such as the National Fire Protection Association, the annual sponsor of National Fire Prevention Week, are making a difference. Due to a thoughtful, multipronged attack, in which battles are won by not having them fought in the first place, fire-related deaths are at an alltime low—reduced to 4,275 last year from 8,900 deaths in 1913 when standardized recordkeeping began.

No one is immune to the dangers of fire. On February 26, 1994, nine Marylanders were killed in a single family home simply because a candle was placed too close to a sofa bed. In order to avoid tragedies like these, members of the fire service, the National Fire Protection Association, and others use National Fire Prevention Week each year to renew and strengthen their commitment to fire-related education programs, construction and engineering improvements, and more effective fire regulations. In line with a recent escalation in efforts to minimize fires caused by carelessness or neglect, the theme of this year's Fire Prevention Week is "Watch What You Heat."

I salute the American Fire Service on the occasion of National Fire Prevention Week and I join in their call to make our country as fire safe as possible.●

#### ETHEL STAATS CELEBRATES 100TH BIRTHDAY

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mrs. Ethel Staats from my hometown, Greenbrae, CA, on the very special occasion of her upcoming 100th birthday on October 22, 1995.

Mrs. Staats has, throughout her 100 years, been a devoted mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She had 3 children, 14 grandchildren, and 17 great-grandchildren. She has been the foundation of a very strong and close family.

In addition, she has dedicated herself to the care and support of others in the community. In her youth, she was a respected nurse, caring for others, and now, in her later years, she has been spending much of her time babysitting and caring for the children of our neighborhood. When my grown children were babies, Mrs. Staats was always there to lend a hand.

She continues to enjoy baseball and football on the radio, with a particular interest in the San Francisco Giants and the Cincinnati Reds.

She happily resides at Rafael Convallescent Hospital in San Rafael, CA. As she says, "If I have to be some place other than home, this place is great."

Ethel Staats is a special woman, one of those senior citizens whom we can all look to with admiration, and who deserves mentioning on her very special day. I wish her the best for her future years and happiest of birthdays.●

#### TRIBUTE TO ROBERT J. LEWIS

● Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, one of the greatest pleasures of our service in the Senate, is that we have the opportunity to call the Nation's attention to acts of extraordinary service and sacrifice by our citizens, and to record those acts as a part of our proud and uniquely American history of leadership by the People.

On more occasions than any of us can count, Mr. President, our praise and thanks have been earned by members of a group who truly embody the highest ideals of citizenship and service—our Nation's firefighters. During this National Fire Prevention Week, I am especially proud to pay tribute to a firefighter from my State, Capt. Robert J. Lewis of the Talleyville Fire Company.

On June 30 of this year, the Talleyville Fire Company was dispatched to help battle a house fire in Brandywood, a community just north of Wilmington, DE. There was heavy smoke coming from the attic, and the firefighters immediately went to work with handlines directed to the upper floor of the house.

An engine crew from the nearby Claymont Fire Company was assigned to search the main attic. In the course of that search, Claymont Firefighter Greg Denston was caught when fire broke through the wall, engulfing the attic in flames and leaving little chance of escape by way of the staircase.

In the course of working his way to the attic, Firefighter Denston had lost his helmet, and his protective mask had become dislodged when the flames broke through the wall. He alertly activated his personal safety signal device, hoping that someone would hear his call for help.

Rescue Capt. Robert J. Lewis did hear, Mr. President, and he responded.

Captain Lewis found a Claymont Fire Company helmet at the bottom of the attic staircase. He fought his way

through heavy smoke and intense heat, and managed to get to the attic by way of the kind of fold-down stairs that can be hard to navigate under the best of circumstances. And these were surely the worst of circumstances.

The attic was literally under siege by the fire. But Captain Lewis managed to locate Firefighter Denston and to pull him down the stairs, where several other firefighters helped get their injured comrade out of the house and on his way to medical treatment. Firefighter Denston was hospitalized for 7 days, and has continued his recovery at home.

The hope of that recovery is only possible, Mr. President, because Robert Lewis answered the call for help, as firefighters do every day in cities and towns across America.

Captain Lewis' professional instincts—and all firefighters are professionals—his professional instincts were perfect; he acted precisely as his training had taught him.

But training can only teach you how to save a life. It cannot make you do it.

The personal instinct that led Captain Lewis to act quickly and decisively—automatically, without pausing to weigh the pros and cons, putting his concern for another above his concern for his own safety—that instinct comes from deep within. It is something hard to define, but it makes ordinary citizens into heroes every day.

One American writer described it this way: "There is a certain blend of courage, integrity, character and principle which has no satisfactory dictionary name but has been called different things at different times, in different countries. Our American name for it is 'guts.'" Training makes a professional; guts, Mr. President, make a hero.

Capt. Robert J. Lewis of the Talleyville Fire Company did not become a hero on June 30, 1995. He was already a hero, as were his fellow firefighters, because they know that every time they answer the call they may be putting their lives at risk. And still they answer—without pausing to weigh the pros and cons, putting their concern for others above their concern for their own safety—each and every time.

In recognizing Captain Lewis for his extraordinary service, we recognize all firefighters. They represent and summon the best in us—the best of the American character—and we are grateful to them all.●

#### ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1995

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today it stand in recess until the hour of 9:30 a.m. tomorrow, Thursday, October 12, 1995; that following the prayer, the Journal of proceedings be deemed approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that there be a period of